

Message Text

PAGE 01 ROME 14289 271539Z

43

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 NEA-10 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

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R 271350Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2490

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

USMISSION GENEVA

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

S E C R E T ROME 14289

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, VT, SU, ET, ZA, LI, XF

SUBJECT: PAPAL AUDIENCE FOR AFRICAN LEADERS

DEPT PASS USINT CAIRO

REF: ROME 14272 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: FOLLOWING LENGTHY WORKING MEETING WITH AFRICAN LEADERS, POPE PAUL AGREED TO CONVEY TO GENEVA CONFERENCE THEIR VIEWS ON MIDEAST AND JERUSALEM. THIS WILL PROBABLY BE DONE THROUGH PAPAL LETTER TO US AND USSR AS CONFERENCE CO-CHAIRMEN. VISITORS PRAISED POPE FOR HIS CONCERN FOR AFRICA AND EXPRESSED HOPE HE CONTINUE EFFORTS. THEY ASKED POPE TO COUNSEL MODERATION TO PORTUGUESE IN
SECRET

PAGE 02 ROME 14289 271539Z

AFRICA. END SUMMARY.

1. VATICAN "FONMIN" ARCHBISHOP CASAROLI PROVIDED US DEC 24 WITH DESCRIPTION OF 90-MINUTE DEC 22 WORKING MEETING BETWEEN POPE PAUL

AND HAILE SELASSIE, PRESIDENT NIMEIRI, VICE PRESIDENT GREENE, FONMIN MWAANGA, ANF FONMINS OF ETHIOPIA, SUDAN AND LIBERIA. CASAROLI SAID MEETING WAS FIRST TIME IN RECENT HISTORY THAT POPE HAD RECEIVED MORE THAN ONE PRINCIPAL GUEST AND HAD SAT DOWN AROUND TABLE FOR INFORMAL DISCUSSION. CASAROLI SAID THAT AFRICANS SOUGHT PAPAL AUDIENCE IN ORDER TO MAKE THEIR VIEWS KNOWN AT GENEVA CONFERENCE, SOMETHING THEY FELT WOULD OTHERWISE BE IMPOSSIBLE. BELIEVING THAT POPE WAS ONLY NEUTRAL PARTY INTERESTED IN ME, THEY CONSIDERED HIM BEST CHANNEL FOR PRESENTING THEIR VIEWS. ALTHOUGH AFRICANS MADE CLEAR THEY HAD NO MANDATE TO SPEAK FOR AFRICA AS WHOLE, GROUP'S RELIGIOUS AND GEOGRAPHICAL COMPOSITION DID GIVE IT SOME REPRESENTATIONAL QUALITY. MEETING WAS USEFUL AND EXTREMELY CORDIAL, POINT WHICH CASAROLI FOUND ESPECIALLY NOTEWORTHY IN CASE OF NIMEIRI WHOSE COUNTRY UNTIL FEW YEARS AGO HAD GRAVE PROBLEMS WITH CATHOLIC CHURCH. CASAROLI SAID THAT GUESTS ALSO FREELY ADMITTED THAT THEIR COUNTRIES WERE SUFFERING FROM ECONOMIC PROBLEMS INHERENT IN ME SITUATION, A POINT WHICH HE NOTED MAY ALSO HAVE ENCOURAGED THEM TO TAKE INITIATIVE ON ME. AT REQUEST OF AFRICAN LEADERS, AGENDA TOPICS WERE ME AND RACISM AND COLONIALISM IN AFRICA.

2. AS STATED IN INFORMAL COMMUNIQUE ISSUED FOLLOWING MEETING, AFRICAN LEADERS STRESSED THAT ON ME ALL PARTIES MUST TAKE FULL ADVANTAGE OF POSSIBILITIES OFFERED BY GENEVA CONFERENCE AND SPECIAL CARE MUST BE EXERCISED TO ASSURE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE THEIR JUST RIGHTS (NOT SPECIFIED). AFRICAN LEADERS ALSO AFFIRMED IN COMMUNIQUE "THAT JERUSALEM SHOULD NOT BE UNDER CONTROL OF ONE SOLE RELIGION" AND THAT "FOR THE STATUS OF THE CITY A SOLUTION MUST BE FOUND ON THE BASIS OF THE UN RESOLUTION." CASAROLI SAID HE DID NOT BELIEVE THAT IN SUBSCRIBING TO ABOVE FORMULA ON JERUSALEM AFRICAN LEADERS, ESPECIALLY PRES NIMEIRI, WERE NECESSARILY EXCLUDING ARAB SOVEREIGNTY OVER CITY. IN ANY CASE, QUESTION OF JERUSALEM'S SOVEREIGNTY WAS LEFT VAGUE DURING TALKS. CASAROLI SAID NO CONCRETE SOLUTIONS WERE DISCUSSED FOR ME SETTLEMENT.

3. ACCORDING TO COMMUNIQUE, "POPE CONFIRMED HOLY SEE'S POSITION REGARDING HOLY PLACES AND IN PARTICULAR JERUSALEM" CASAROLI SAID
SECRET

PAGE 03 ROME 14289 271539Z

DISCUSSIONS COVERED HOLY SEE'S WELL-KNOWN POSITION THAT OLD CITY SHOULD BE LEFT INTACT AND THAT EVENTUAL SOLUTION SHOULD RESPECT ECUNEMICAL RELIGIOUS CHARACTER OF CITY. ALTHOUGH VATICAN HAS NEVER USED TERM "INTERNATIONALIZATION" NOR HAS IT EVER ENTERED QUESTION OF SOVEREIGNTY, CASAROLI EXPLAINED THAT "MOST IMPORTANT THING TO POPE IS THAT MEMBERS OF ALL THREE FAITHS FEEL AT HOME IN CITY AND NOT JUST BE GUESTS REGARDLESS OF HOW WELCOME." JERUSALEM SHOULD BE A PLACE WHERE MEMBERS OF ALL THREE FAITHS LIVE, MINGLE AND WORSHIP "IN THEIR OWN HOUSE." AS POPE EXPLAINED TO AFRICAN VISITORS, VATICAN POSITION HAS NOT CHANGED. POPE CONTINUES TO OPPOSE SOLUTION WHICH WOULD MERELY GIVE CONTROL OF INDIVIDUAL SHRINES TO RELIGIOUS GROUPS CONCERNED.

4. COMMUNIQUE SPECIFIED THAT PARTIES HAD AGREED TO MAINTAIN CONTACT. CASAROLI EXPLAINED THAT THIS WOULD BE DONE THROUGH NORMAL DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS.

5. THE AFRICAN GUESTS EXPRESSED THEIR PLEASURE OVER REFERENCES TO ME IN POPE'S DEC 21 ADDRESS TO COLLEGE OF CARDINALS. IN THIS STATEMENT POPE HAD NOTED IT HIS DUTY AS WELL AS HIS RIGHT TO MAKE HOLY SEE'S VIEWS ON JERUSALEM FELT AT PROPER MOMENT. CASAROLI SAID DECISION ON HOW TO DO THIS WOULD BE TAKEN AT PROPER MOMENT, BUT HE ASSURED US THAT AMB LODGE'S OFFICE AND SOV AMT TO ITALY RYZHOV WOULD BE ADVISED OF DEVELOPMENTS.

6. CASAROLI SAID AFRICAN LEADERS PRAISED POPE FOR HIS DEEP INTEREST IN AFRICA'S WELFARE AND FOR HIS STATEMENTS COUNSELLING MODERATION AND PEACE IN MOZAMBIQUE THIS YEAR. THEY ALSO EXPRESSED PLEASURE AT POPE'S APPEAL FOR SELF-DETERMINATION AND INDEPENDENCE IN HIS DEC 21 SPEECH TO CARDINALS. IN CONCLUSION GUESTS EXPRESSED HOPE THAT PONTIFF WOULD CONTINUE HIS INTEREST IN AFRICA AND ALSO ASKED THAT HE USE HIS INFLUENCE WITH CATHOLIC PORTUGUESE TO COUNSEL MORE REASONABLE APPROACH TOWARD THEIR AFRICAN TERRITORIES. ALTHOUGH VISITORS DID NOT APPEAL FOR OTHER PAPAL ACTIONS IN AFRICA, CASAROLI SAID THEY THE DIPLOMATICALLY PHRASED THEIR COMPLIMENTS IN SUCH A WAY THAT ONE COULD SURMISE THEY WISHED POPE TO TAKE EVEN STRONGER LINE.

7. CASAROLI RECALLED TO US THAT IN HIS CONVERSATION WITH PORTUGUESE FONMIN PATRICIO AT HELSINKI NPT TALKS, HE WAS ASTOUNDED AT APPARENT DEPTH OF PORTUGUESE SINCERITY OVER WHAT THEY ARE DOING
SECRET

PAGE 04 ROME 14289 271539Z

IN AFRICA. THIS CONVICTION MAKES IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR PORTUGUESE TO SEE REALITY, CASAROLI SAID. FACTOR THAT GIVES HOLY SEE GREATEST PAUSE ABOUT PUSHING TOO HARD IN PORTUGUES AFRICA IS CONCERN OVER FATE OF LARGE NUMBER OF BLACK AFRICANS WHO COOPERATE WITH PORTUGAL. THESE AFRICANS FREQUENTLY EXPRESS TO CHURCH LEADERS THEIR FEARS OF BEING LIQUIDATED SHOULD THERE BE INDEPENDENCE.

8. AT CLOSE OF MEETING, POPE AGREED TO CONVEY HIS GUESTS' IDEAS ON ME TO GENEVA CONFERENCE, WOTHOUT SAYING HOW HE INTENDED TO DO SO. ON DEC 23, HE DISCUSSED WITH CASAROLI HOW THIS MIGHT BEST BE DONE. CASAROLI SAID THEY WOULD PROBABLY DECIDE TO SEND A PAPAL LETTER TO US AND USSR IN THEIR CAPACITY AS CO-CHAIRMEN OF CONFERENCE. VOLPE

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED CAIRO.

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BEIRUT
GENEVA
JERUSALEM
JIDDA
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